

## CONGRESSMAN MICHAUD FIGHTS CAFTA, INTRODUCES THE "FAIR TRADE FOR ALL ACT OF 2005"

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"I first ran for Congress because I saw what unfair trade deals were doing to our workers, our communities and our economy. I have used every opportunity during my 3 years in Congress to hit that message home and people are hearing it. The Administration may have won the vote last night - but it was at great political cost with intense arm twisting and back room deal making," said Congressman Michaud. "For example - NAFTA passed in 1994 with a comfortable margin of 34 votes. CAFTA passed last night with just a 2 vote margin - and that was after the vote was held open for over 90 minutes. Democrats and Republicans alike voted no. Rural and urban Members alike voted no.

Labor and business supporters alike voted no. So in short - we are making a real difference. Change doesn't happen overnight, but real change is in fact happening in the Congress - and I will continue to fight to reform America's trade deals, to stand up for American workers, and to protect American jobs."

In response to the vote, Representative Michael H. Michaud introduced the "Fair Trade for All Act of 2005," a measure requiring the President of the United States to immediately withdraw from the agreement.

"Last night, our workers in Maine and across the nation lost out with the passage of CAFTA," Michaud said. "In Maine, we know all too well how devastating these trade agreements have been to our industries. In the

wake of NAFTA, Maine has lost 23 percent of our manufacturing base in the last three years alone. Unemployment in certain areas has reached as high as 30 percent."

"CAFTA takes most of its language right from NAFTA. It only promises more job loss," Michaud said. "That is why I was not willing to wait one more moment to introduce legislation to withdraw from an agreement that only promises pink slips for our workers."

Despite having 44 million inhabitants, the CAFTA nations only boast the purchasing power of New Haven, Connecticut. More than 40 percent of Central American workers work for less than two dollars a day.

"Clearly, under these conditions, CAFTA will not truly open new market opportunities for American products- it merely allows more outsourcing and access to cheap labor markets with almost nonexistent environmental and labor standards." Michaud explained.

During the President's tenure in office, Congress has typically voted within 65 days after he has signed a trade agreement. But CAFTA has been on hold for more than a year because Congressional bipartisan opposition had remained steadfast.

"Arm-twisting and political bribery were used by House Leadership to force through this badly negotiated trade deal. Even President Bush made a trip to the Capitol to browbeat those who considered voting against his trade pact," Michaud explained. "Much like the vote on another flawed piece of legislation - the so called Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 - the debate on this controversial legislation took place well into the night, while America was not watching."

"I promise to continue to fight for our jobs when it comes to these trade deals," Michaud said. "Our workers and their families deserve no less."

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